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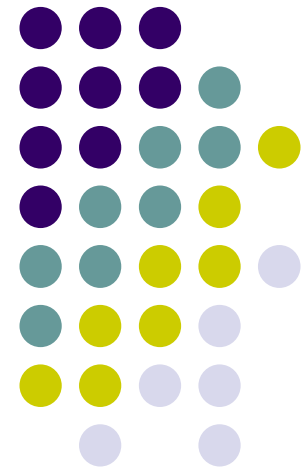
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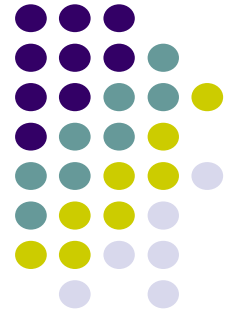
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Policy, practice and service delivery: Findings from a 2 year study

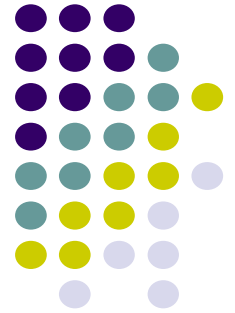
Dr. Helen Masson
Reader in Social Work
University of Huddersfield





Order of Presentation

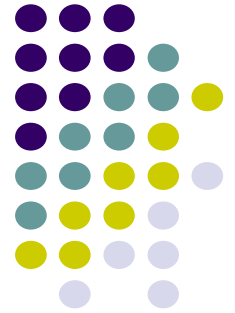
- Brief background to the study;
- Principles and goals of work;
- Knowledge base and theoretical models;
- Assessment and intervention services and placements;
- Policy and legal complexities;
- User views;
- Summary.



Useful literature:

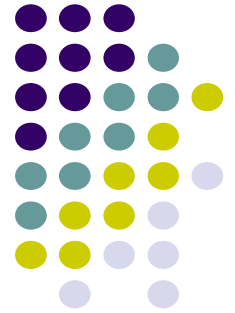
- Hackett, S., Masson, H. and Phillips, S. (2005) – report on two year project into policy, procedures and services in the UK and ROI – available on YJB website;
- Erooga, M. and Masson, H. (eds) (2006) *Children and Young People who Sexually Abuse Others: Current Developments and Practice Responses*, Routledge

Research project



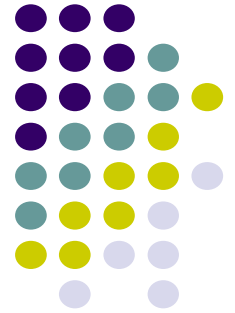
- 2 year project 2002 – 2004;
- Funded by National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), National Organisation for the Treatment of Abusers (NOTA) and the Youth Justice Board (YJB).

Aims of the Study

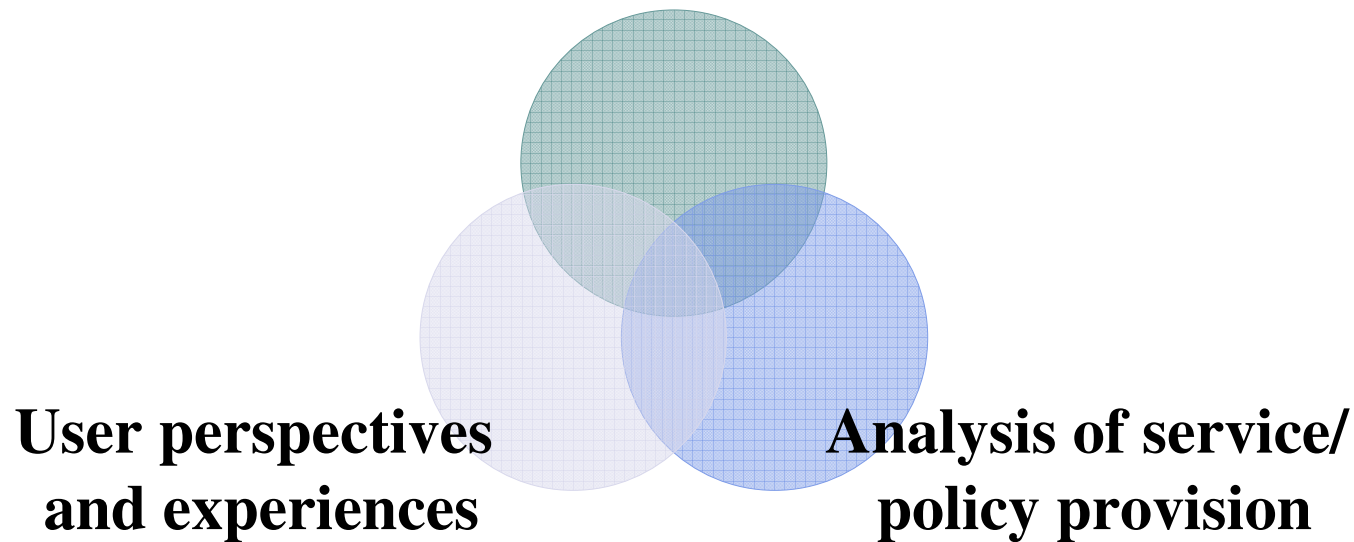


- To investigate developments in the UK and the Republic of Ireland (ROI) in services for young people who sexually abuse, including their organisational, theoretical and policy bases;
- To explore the experiences of young people and their families receiving such services.

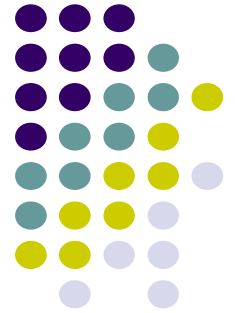
3 areas



Practitioner/ manager perspectives

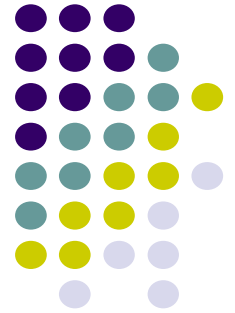


3 stage methodology

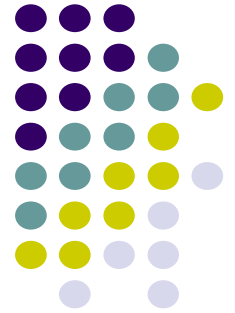


- A comprehensive survey mapping services and policies to young people and their families across the UK and ROI (questionnaires and documentary analysis);
- Two Delphi exercises, collecting views and opinions of ‘experts’ in the field;
- An exploratory study of service user perspectives from a variety of sites.

Groups within the Population – attending to diversity



- Male adolescent sexual abusers;
 - Female adolescent sexual abusers;
 - Young children who Sexually Harm;
- PLUS impact of:
- Learning disability;
 - Minority ethnic status.



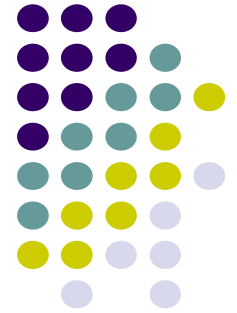
Attending to diversity continued....

- 105 or 56% of services across all 5 nations (Hackett et al., 2003) had worked with young people not charged with any offence;

BUT

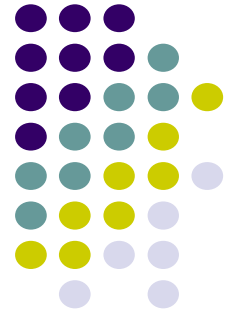
- All 186 had also worked with young people charged with an offence, right up to the most serious offences such as rape.

Issues of Recidivism



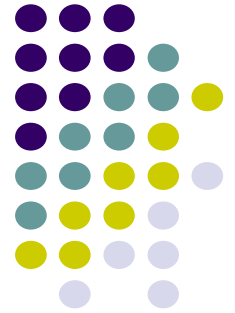
- Early thinking – young sexual abusers were likely to become the adult sex offenders of the future unless subject to early and often substantial intervention (under court order?);
- Current thinking: ‘the vast majority of young people do not go on to become adult sex offenders, but an identifiable, small subgroup are at high risk of so doing’ (Hackett et. al)

Principles and goals of work with children and young people who have sexually harmful or abusive behaviour:

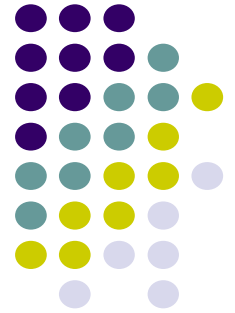


- Children and young people who display sexually harmful or abusive behaviours are, first and foremost, children and should not be regarded as mini adult sex offenders;
- There are multiple pathways to sexually abusive behaviour. It is not simply to be explained by a young person's victimisation experiences (although there must be sensitivity to the possibility and impact of such early experiences);

Principles and goals continued:



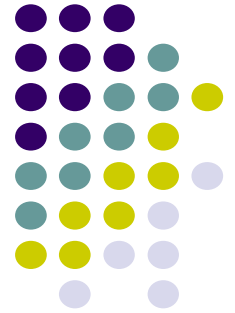
- The aim of work is to help young people understand and accept responsibility for their behaviour and develop strategies and coping skills to avoid abusing or offending again;
- (In addition to victim and community safety) the goal of work is also to promote the physical, sexual, social and emotional well-being of children and young people who have sexually harmed or abused others;
- The goal is for carers to acknowledge what their child has done, believe in and support change and to take on responsibility for changing the context of the family.



Knowledge drawn on includes:

- normal child development;
- learning theory and cognitive behavioural approaches;
- attachment theory;
- family systems theory;
- trauma and post traumatic stress theories;
- solution-focused work and motivational interviewing.

Models and concepts for understanding sexual abusive behaviour:



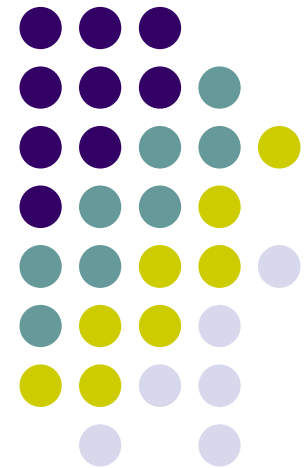
- Four-preconditions Model (Finkelhor (1984);
- Sexual Abuse Cycle (Lane 1991; 1997);

Associated concepts:

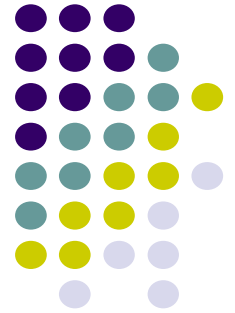
- Minimisation, denial and projection of blame;
- Cognitive distortions;
- Deviant Sexual Arousal;
- Victim empathy and awareness;
- Relapse prevention.

What works with young offenders in the community

David Utting and Julie Vennard
2000, Barnardo's

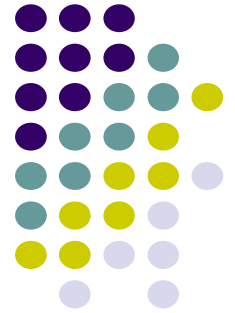


What works in community-based programmes



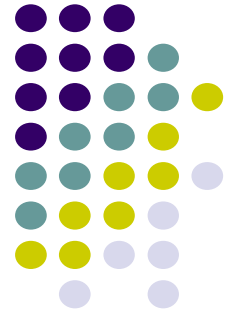
- Programmes seeking to improve personal and social skills;
- Programmes focused on changing behaviour;
- Multiple service programmes, bringing together a number of approaches, e.g. parenting programmes, cognitive-behavioural programmes, leisure and sport programmes, education, employment and training programmes.

The more effective programmes also:



- Target high and medium-risk offenders;
- Are well structured;
- Use an approach which challenges ways of thinking as well as behaving;
- Address the full range of offending-related problems, including family and environmental factors as well as personal deficits;
- Adhere to agreed objectives and procedures.

Assessment Frameworks in E&W (Hackett et al., 2003):



- ASSET – Home Office (2000) (good on risk);
- Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (DOH, 2000) (good on needs);
- AIM project assessment frameworks (see Erooga and Masson, 2006);
- Frameworks sometimes used in combinations;
- Reasonable confidence about assessment work, debates about terminology continue.

Assessment – availability and quality (all nations)



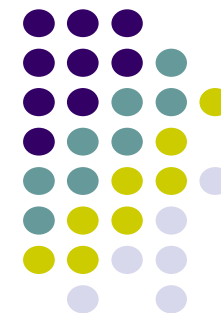
Availability of assessment services	% Respondents	Quality of assessment services	% Respondents
Excellent	14% (26)	Excellent	18% (33)
Satisfactory	42% (79)	Satisfactory	55% (102)
Inadequate	32% (59)	Inadequate	18% (33)
Entirely unsatisfactory	8% (14)	Entirely unsatisfactory	2% (3)
Don't know/ not answered	4% (7)	Don't know/ not answered	6% (11)

Intervention or 'treatment' issues (all nations)



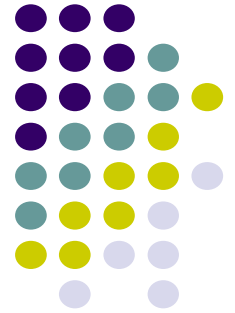
Kind of intervention service	% (n) of non YOT respondents	% (n) YOT respondents
Therapeutic, community based, one-to-one	87% (60)	91% (86)
Therapeutic, community based, groupwork	29% (20)	13% (12)
Residentially-based intervention	26% (18)	9% (8)
Other kind of service	7% (5)	10% (9)

Availability of intervention/treatment services:



Availability of intervention services	% Respondents (n)
Excellent	8% (15)
Satisfactory	38% (71)
Inadequate	38% (71)
Entirely unsatisfactory	9% (17)
Don't know/ not answered	4% (8)

Assessment and intervention or 'treatment' issues – recurring themes



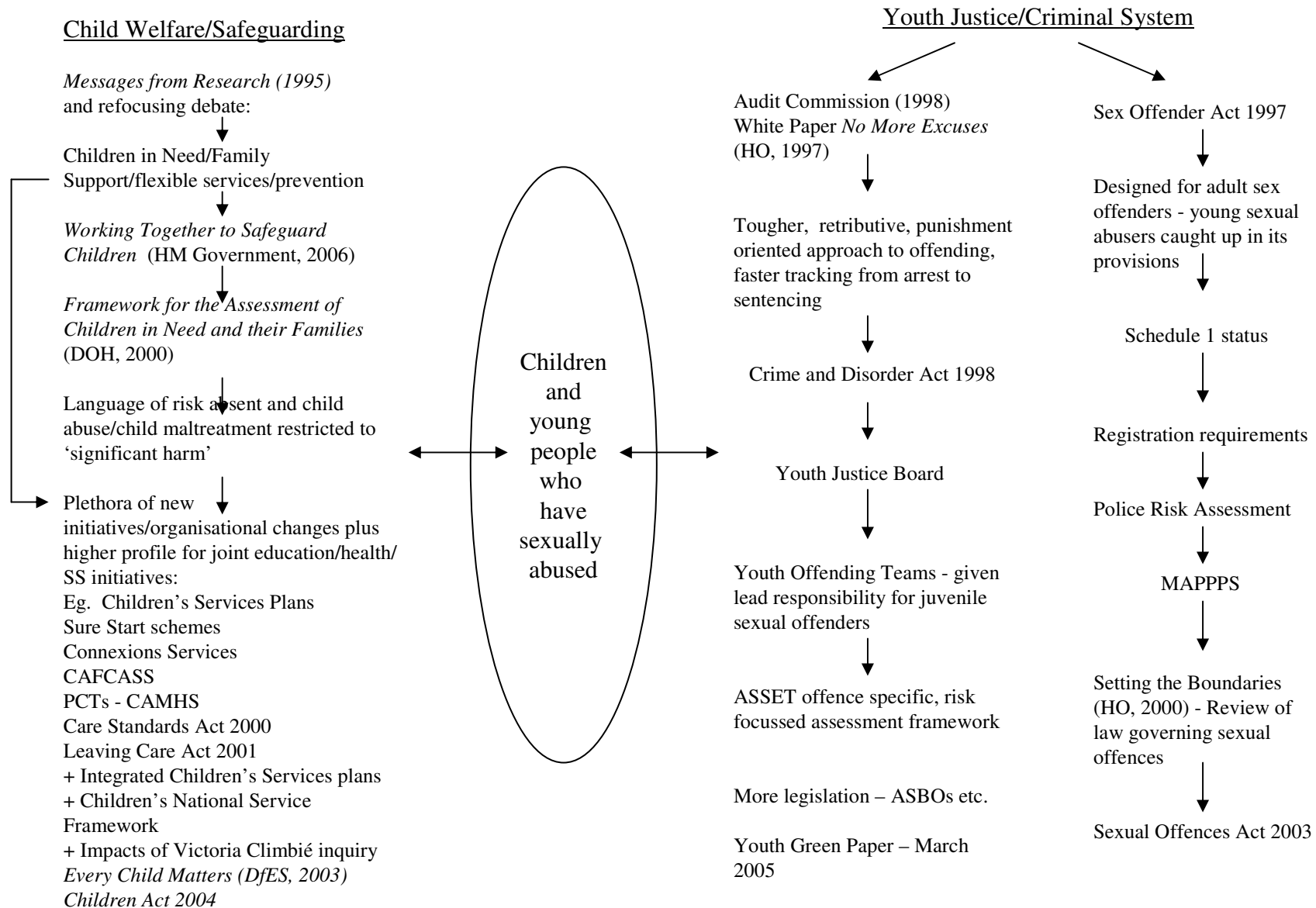
- Demand far exceeding supply;
- Long waiting lists at specialist services;
- Such services often located a long distance away from users' homes;
- Funding problems which prevent the purchase of specialist services other than in the most extreme circumstances; and
- Limited skills and experiences in this area of work within more general services such as social service departments.

Placement provision – availability and quality:

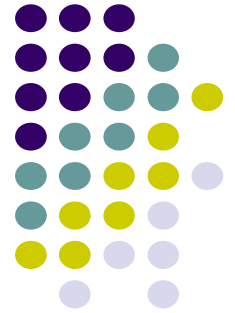


Availability of placements	Numbers of Respondents (%)	Quality of placements	Numbers of Respondents (%)
Excellent	-	Excellent	4% (4)
Satisfactory	14% (15)	Satisfactory	21% (24)
Inadequate	46% (50)	Inadequate	9% (10)
Entirely unsatisfactory	28% (31)	Entirely unsatisfactory	4% (4)
Don't Know/Not answered	14% (15)	Don't Know/Not answered	62% (69)

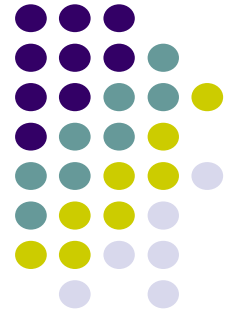
Recent guidance and legislation in relation to child welfare/child protection and youth justice/criminal system which impact on children and young people who have sexually abused



Consistency and co-ordination



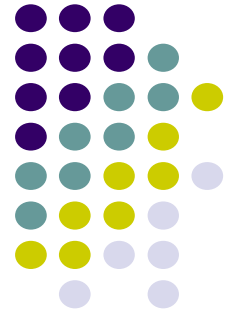
- 57% of YOT and other services in E+W (n=96) said local practice reflected a co-ordinated approach on the part of youth justice, child welfare, education and health ‘always’ or ‘mostly’; however
- 57% of all 186 services (n = 106) agreed or strongly agreed that current child welfare/youth crime arrangements work against effective work with children and young people who have sexually abused;
- Change for the future: ECM? Ministry for Justice?



Users' views

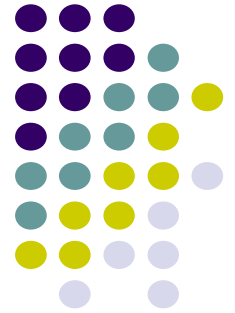
- Positive experiences of specialist services, not often mirrored by experiences of wider system;
 - Having to wait a year for help (a young man)
 - False promises being made
 - Not explaining the process
 - Staying involved too long - 'my son felt abused by them'
 - Particularly difficult experiences of schools post-abuse
- Isolation and shame (parents)
- Where to go for help when intervention stops (parents)

Summary



- A problem firmly on the map;
- Increased confidence about identification, use of terminology remains problematic, especially in relation to policy and guidance;
- Increased acknowledgement of issues of diversity within the population;
- More clarity about issues of recidivism, and the need for different levels of intervention;

Summary



- 96% strongly agreed that there is a need to seek greater consistency in the application of the law, both civil and criminal;
- Increasing clarity about assessment and intervention content and process, based on a clear distinction between children and adult sex offenders;
- The lack of a continuum of quality assured and widely available services continues to be of considerable concern.